

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS  
OF LONDON

SIR RAYMOND CRAWFURD

REGISTRAR

1925—1938



# SIR RAYMOND CRAWFURD

REGISTRAR OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF

PHYSICIANS OF LONDON

1925-1938

## An Appreciation

AT A SPECIAL COMITIA OF THE COLLEGE

ON 4 APRIL 1938

BY

VISCOUNT DAWSON OF PENN

PRESIDENT

1938



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2019 with funding from  
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30631063>

## SIR RAYMOND CRAWFURD

TO form a picture of Sir Raymond Crawford we must have regard to the background of his upbringing. His father was a clergyman who had been admitted a member of the Inner Temple before taking Orders. He had an ample private fortune, and a large family ; he would appear to have been socially and kindly inclined, for he was prompt to establish a cricket ground wherever he did clerical work, and in general practised the art of hospitality. He further belonged to the day when the families of the beneficed clergy held a fine record of service to the Empire at home and abroad.

Raymond Crawford, the sixth son, was educated at Winchester, which he entered as a Scholar, at New College, Oxford, and King's College, London. This sequence in his training reminds us of the days when Church and State were strongly linked institutions, and explains why throughout his life Crawford was a supporter of established order.

After taking his B.A. degree with honours in the classical schools in 1889 he entered forthwith the medical faculty of King's College, London, having been awarded a Warneford Entrance Scholarship.

He was the most able man of his year, and continued to gain scholarships and prizes throughout his student career. In 1894 he took his medical degrees at Oxford, and became a member of this college. In 1895 he filled the post of House Physician, and in 1898 was elected Assistant Physician of King's College Hospital. In the same year he became Sub-Dean of the Medical School, succeeding to the post of Dean in 1900.

The school was down at heel, and the hospital out of date, and his four years of office were to be a time of difficulty and change. At this time Dr. Headlam, now Bishop of Gloucester, also educated at Winchester and New College, came to King's College as Principal, and so met two school-fellows and friends.

How fortunate for the fate of King's College! Dr. Headlam, though possessed of considerable academic experience, knew nothing of medical education and the complex of Medical School and Hospital. Crawford became his adviser and staunch supporter, and these two master-builders laid the foundations of a new King's College Hospital at Denmark Hill, and of a reconstituted Medical School: and on the personal side there matured a friendship intimate and abiding till Crawford's death.

At this period of his life Crawford must have possessed great energy and devotion, for besides this big reconstruction at King's College he was Assistant Physician at his hospital, was also on the staff of the Royal Free Hospital, and was a tireless and successful teacher. And more, he was at the same time both seeking and making his reputation as a physician, and was thought to be in the way of becoming a leading consultant. At the same period he contributed to the 'Transactions of the Pathological Society' and to Quain's 'Dictionary of Medicine', and was joint author of a revised edition of Burney Yeo's 'Manual of Medical Treatment'.

After four years of hard work Crawford resigned the post of Dean; but, though free of these routine duties, he continued his labours for his hospital and school—indeed, these lasted till recent days.

Then came his tragic breakdown—disease of bone—the operation on his knee—his body imprisoned at the age of forty for a term which he knew must be not only long in time, but uncertain in event—the clouding of his hopes and ambitions.

What a test of character, and especially for a man whom private fortune made independent of the necessity for struggle! Though condemned to lameness,

Crawfurd came through stronger in fibre, with his outlook, though saddened, valiantly remodelled: but with his pride of body and sensitive nature his disablement was henceforth seldom out of mind; he achieved the dignity of acceptance, but never the healing of reconciliation. Though he retained his sense of humour, he lost the gift of laughter, 'Laughter that limits evil to a span'.

During the long months of immobility, he turned his attention to literature, and wrote attractive contributions to the history of medicine. And after his recovery, abandoning thought of private practice, he devoted himself to his hospital work, and to public services, in both of which he had already gained high repute: for his work for King's College had already been truly laid.

I will next pass to consider Crawfurd's long attachment to Epsom College, both on account of its achievements and because it brought into relief the varied qualities of his mind.

Joining the Council in 1915, he became its Chairman in 1923, and did service of outstanding worth to the College during the following thirteen years.

He found Epsom College a school of three hundred boys, of whom one hundred were in the preparatory

forms; he left it five hundred strong, all of public school age. He saw that the school must contain a science side of the first order. There followed, under the guidance of this man of affairs, buildings for physics, chemistry, and later biology, all completely equipped; and he gathered the greater part of the necessary money by his insistent and persuasive efforts, and not less by the force of his own unobtrusive example.

Yet more—he was the champion of the school's intellectual aims; and he set himself to know the masters and boys and give to the school a unity of purpose. And here we see him as a *friend of youth*, and the school came to know this. Many a time for a master or a boy the outlook on life would be clearer, more worth while, after a talk with Crawford. He quickly assorted with what was important to the other man's mind. He would talk at length, maybe, with a boy about a butterfly or beetle, or with sympathy and understanding with the young master about the girl he wanted to marry.

And so Crawford was discerned as one to whom they could appeal, and there gathered round him confidence and affection.

Here I may interpolate that in the larger circle of

London life many have gone to him in difficulty and trouble and found him large-minded and too virile 'to praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue unexercised and unbreathed that never sallies out . . . '.

Then as a sportsman—the smallest boy in the school knew of his keen interest in sport, how seldom he missed a cup-tie of his hospital, and in particular followed the play of Epsom boys during their school days and after. And here it is fitting to put on record that the heart attack which caused his death was provoked by the exciting finish to the Army and Navy football match.

As a teacher of Clinical Medicine he was surprisingly good and in his ward rounds he drew a large number of students, one result of which was that for four possible years in succession the Murchison Scholarship was awarded to a student of King's College Medical School.

In addition to professional writings Crawford made valuable contributions to the History of Medicine. 'The Last days of Charles II' appeared in 1909; the Fitzpatrick Lectures on 'The King's Evil' in 1912 and 'Plague and Pestilence in Literature' in 1914. His Harveian Oration in 1919, 'Forerunners of Harvey in Antiquity', laid claim that something was

owing to the master-minds of antiquity—the work of Aristotle and the views of Galen and Erasistratus.

In thought and feeling Crawford was a scholar; his knowledge of classical literature had entered into the fabric of his mind. At the same time he read widely as became the catholicity of his interests in literature and art.

Crawford's services to this College began twenty-six years ago when he became a member of the Board of Examiners, and he subsequently held the positions of Councillor, Censor, and Senior Censor. In 1925 he was appointed Registrar and a representative on the Committee of Management of the Conjoint Board. In the latter position his knowledge of medical education and his administrative gifts were of great service, and not less the time and application he devoted without stint to details which, though tiresome, were invaluable to the efficient working of the Board.

His familiar figure as Registrar, his grasp of its duties, his clarity of thought, precision of speech, and never failing courtesy will live for long in the memory of the Fellows.

He held a pride in the long history and traditions of this College and a conviction that on their sure

foundations should be built a policy of co-operative leadership which will direct medicine along the path of knowledge and make it a potent force in the determination of national well-being. Despite a sentimental attachment to our present home, he was enthusiastic for the removal of the College to a more spacious and appropriate site.

For seven years he and I have worked together in companionship—and with gratitude I shall always treasure the memory of his disinterested labour, discriminating judgement, and his friendship—the more to be valued because sustained, despite the fact and awareness of his own physical disability. For some months he had shown evidence of declining powers, and we cannot but be thankful that at the end of his life he was spared that sense of disability which he so courageously survived in his prime.

I spoke of his sensibility—it brought him joy as well as sadness. He had a deep appreciation of all natural beauty, and in particular birds and flowers were for him a constant source of delight. For him:

*‘Beauty is truth, truth beauty, that is all  
Ye know on earth and all ye need to know.’*

His philosophy of life bore resemblance to that of

Matthew Arnold. Both had reverence for what they could not share. Neither of them wished the bells of the churches to be stilled. Matthew Arnold spoke of such a man as Crawford:

*'Yea, I take to myself to witness,  
That I have loved no darkness,  
Sophisticated no truth,  
Nursed no delusion,  
Allow'd no fear.'*

Yet Crawford's was the Christian ethic—strict and even stern with himself but abiding charity towards the difficulties and failings of others.

But the inner light of Crawford's mind remained hidden even from his most intimate friends. We knew the light was there from what it gave out to others. 'Ye shall know them by their fruits.' He had the faith which belongs to courage and grace abounding. A doer of the word untied by beliefs, which were for him dogmatic rather than dynamic: a man who not only asked, 'Who is my neighbour?' but often made search to find him.

With grateful hearts we bid him farewell.

PRINTED IN  
GREAT BRITAIN  
AT THE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS  
OXFORD  
BY  
JOHN JOHNSON  
PRINTER  
TO THE  
UNIVERSITY



